

Chapter 1 – April`s Day

The Beginning and the End

"I'm not the girl-who-lived!" Jamie screamed into the hall.

Her hands yanked her skirt down revealing the god-awful truth.

"I'm the BOY-who-lived!"

Harry woke to cold hands skimming over his torso and slipping under his shirt. He gasped and looked up into obsidian eyes.

"Sev?" Harry whispered, confused.

"Just relax, Harry. I want you to be comfortable for your big day." Severus sat down on the bed and gave Harry a vial filled with ominous green liquid. "Drink it."

Harry bit his lip, hesitant. One look at Severus however, had him gulping down the contents of the vial. He felt warmth take over his body and suddenly the proximity of Severus' body did not confuse him. He shuddered and stood, looking at Severus with a small smile.

"One day we will be together, but for now, I must remain with Draco." With that, Harry left the room, knowing that today would be interesting to say the least.

Harry entered the great hall and quickly found a seat between Blaise and Draco. Blaise was looking at Theodore unusually, almost as if he were infatuated with the boy. Harry did not pay much attention to this however, as Jamie Potter was storming over towards him. Harry stood up and held open his arms.

Jamie broke out into a grin and ran into them, pressing her lips to Harry's. Suddenly, the hall went silent. The students and teachers looked at the two with a mixture of utter bewilderment and disgust.

"WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, HARRY?" Draco shouted, losing his composure but not caring.

Draco stared wide-eyed as the twins kissed each other. He stood up, ignoring Blaise and Theodore who told him not to interfere yet. Harry broke the kiss and looked at Draco sadly.

"How could you, Harry? I thought," Draco whispered, eyes fierce. "I thought you were mine?"

Draco sneered at Jamie and raised his hand. It sailed through the air and slapped the girl hard enough to leave a handprint. Jamie looked at Harry and Draco in shock before bursting into tears. Hermione and Ron followed her as she ran out of the hall.

Draco pulled Harry closer and crushed their lips together. Cheers and gasps met their union but neither paid any attention, too lost in their sensations. Harry gasped as Draco roughly staggered back. Severus looked furious at the two.

"What is the meaning of this foolishness?" Severus snarled.

"Sev...we talked about this," Harry whispered, blushing hard.

Severus ignored him and glared at Draco. Before anyone could blink, Draco knelt on the ground, cradling a quickly bruising cheek. Severus dropped his hand in satisfaction. Harry looked upon the scene with shock and before he knew it, Severus was kissing him. It was glorious and sweet, and Harry knew automatically which person he wanted to be with the most.

Dumbledore stood up and waved his wand in attempts to dispel the illusion, but found his hall filled with floating pies instead. Many students stood up on their seats in attempts to catch these pies with their mouths. Dumbledore looked outraged, as did many of the other professors. They looked up at their headmaster with confusion. What in the world was happening?

Dumbledore opened his mouth to reassure them but all that came out was a snort. He attempted speaking once more, but several snorts sailed out past his lips.

"Snort...snort, snooooooooooooooooooooo," snorted Dumbledore.

“Harry Potter,” sang Jamie, who had reappeared.

“Not a Potter,” Draco sang back.

"I'm a lover," Harry inserted randomly.

“Not a fighter,” Severus hummed.

“HARRRRRRRRRRRRRRYYYYYYY
POOOOOOOOOTTTTTTTTTTTEEEEEEEEEER, I MEAN
HAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRYYYYYY IN DA HOUSE!” chorused the
entirety of the students.

Harry winked devilishly and Argus Filch grabbed Mrs. Norris and smacked a wet one on her furry cheek.

“Harry!” Draco cried out, reaching out dramatically to the boy. “We have to get out of here! Severus is coming to get you!”

Harry ran forward and grabbed Draco's hand, smiling lovingly. "I love you, Draco. I'm so sorry for kissing, Sev. He's just...experienced."

Draco smiled back. "It's all right, beloved. We'll become just as experienced, learning together."

“Quick, divert them!” Severus roared.

Ron, who had entered with Jamie, glared at the two and threw his shoes at them. “Beware, my chess pieces are next, foolish mudbloods!”

Draco pulled out his wand. “Serpensortia!”

Romantic music began playing as a vicious looking cobra sailed out from Draco's wand. Ron caught the snake and looked deep into its

eyes. They cuddled together and Ron led the way to the nearest empty classroom.

Draco looked at Harry and released his hand. Harry looked hurt. His eyes watered and he reached out towards Draco, silently wishing that they could be together again.

"I'm sorry," Harry whispered.

"As am I," Draco replied.

Harry let out a soft sob and began singing.

"Kiss	me	too	fiercely
Hold	me	too	tight
I	need	help	believing
You're	with	me	tonight
My	wildest		dreamings
Could	not		foresee
Lying	beside		you
With you wanting me			

"And	just	for	this	moment
As	long	as	you're	mine
I've	lost	all		resistance
And	crossed	some		borderline
And	if	it	turns	out
It's	over	too		fast
I'll	make	ev'ry	last	moment
As long as you're mine,"	Harry	trailed off,	looking	at
expectantly.				

Draco			scowled,
"Maybe		I'm	brainless
Maybe		I'm	wise
But	you've	got	seeing
Through		different	eyes
Somehow		I've	fallen
Under		your	spell
And	somehow	I'm	feeling

It's "up" that I fell," he sang, voice capturing the already spellbound hall.

Draco and Harry grinned at each other and kissed chastely before singing together.

"Every moment
As long as you're mine
I'll wake up my body
And make up for lost time!"

Draco sent a glance at Severus who glared at him. "Say there's no future, for us as a pair."

Harry joined him and looked at Severus with a small smile before meeting eyes with Draco.

"And though I may know
I don't care!
Just for this moment
As long as you're mine
Come be how you want to
And see how bright we shine
Borrow the moonlight
Until it is through
And know I'll be here holding you
As long as you're mine!"

Chapter 1

The Real Deal

Whatever Harry had been expecting was not this. He looked at his surroundings and frowned at the dirty stench of the river. Severus immediately moved over the rubbish-infested banks of the river. They were walking on a nearly hidden path, Harry realized, otherwise they would have fallen into the river. At the top of the bank was a railing and past that was a cobbled street.

Harry looked at his guardian inquisitively but did not dare speak. Instead, he looked at the identical rows of brick houses in fascination as Severus led him down several streets. Many of the houses seemed deserted as their windows were boarded up. Harry barely managed to prevent himself from crashing into Severus' back as the man abruptly halted.

They were at the very end of a row and a nearby sign informed Harry that the street was called Spinner's End. The lot they stopped at did not comfort Harry at all. All that was left of the house there were piles of scorched bricks and what may have been a staircase.

"Listen carefully, for this is the only way you will know the location to my home," Severus said slowly.

Harry nodded and opened his ears.

His voice dropped to a softer tone as he erected a silencing charm around them. "Number 12 Spinner's End."

Harry blinked at an identical house as the others on the street popped up out of the lot. He looked at the neighbour and frowned.

"Shouldn't it be 10?" Harry asked, more to himself.

"There were two houses in between and therefore, this is really the twelfth house on the street," Severus answered.

"Is there a concealment charm on it?" Harry looked at the house in interest.

“For the location yes, for the appearance, no. This is my home. I do not live in a manor, nor have I ever lived in one. The Snape manor burned down long ago, but because of the charms upon it, no one other than the Snapes had known. I keep up the front that the manor still exists and Dumbledore supports my choice as it throws many off the trail of my home. Only the Malfoys, Dumbledore and the Dark Lord, know where it is.”

Harry looked at Severus suddenly. “Will Tom be visiting here?”

Severus pursed his lips and nodded curtly. “He has been here before. No need to feel embarrassed.”

Harry narrowed his eyes in confusion but Severus was already walking into the house. Inside the house was a small sitting room. There was no hallway between it and the entrance door. It managed to accommodate an armchair and a sofa despite its size, but had nothing else, not even a fireplace. There were two doors leading out from the room but their doors were closed.

“Come, I will give you a tour of the house,” Severus said curtly.

Harry did not understand why Severus was acting so cold. Had he done something wrong? Maybe he was too much of a burden to stay in Severus’ house. Maybe there wasn’t enough space for him to live there as well?

Severus led them through one door, revealing it was a kitchen. The kitchen itself was a bit smaller than the sitting room, but not by much. There was a stove, sink and refrigeration, nothing else. Severus didn’t seem to like cluttering it with appliances and the like. Next, they exited back into the sitting room and entered through the other door. This one led to a narrow staircase.

Harry was surprised at how sturdy and safe the staircase really was as they went upstairs. The upstairs landing had three doors. Two of them were bedrooms, identical in size, and one of them was a bathroom, which was fairly clean except for some rust. Harry realized that Severus was truly short of space as he saw bookcases hung on the back of doors. He expected that magic had been used upon them to keep them from falling every time a door was opened.

Severus led Harry into one of the bedrooms. It was small, Harry admitted, but he didn't mind at all. Severus placed his trunk at the base of the bed and looked down at Harry, face still cold.

"I will go get us dinner, do not leave the house," he said tonelessly.

Harry nodded and waited until Severus had gone before slumping onto the bed. He didn't know what the matter was with Severus, but perhaps it was better if he lived somewhere else? Sighing, Harry started unloading items from his trunk. There was a rickety dresser in the corner of his room that he could use for his clothes.

Harry smiled. His room...the thought warmed his heart.

Feeling better, Harry started to make himself at home. Things were looking up for him, and for once, Harry couldn't think of something bad happening to disrupt his happiness. He heard the door open and rushed downstairs to greet Severus who had returned with Indian takeout.

Harry had never had Indian food before, but the spicy aroma coming from the bags smelled delicious.

"I'm afraid I do not have a dining room, so we will have to eat in here," Severus said, a tad bitterly.

Harry nodded. "Should I get anything from the kitchen?"

"Two plates and two glasses, they supplied utensils," Severus instructed.

Harry went into the kitchen and found the plates and glasses with little difficulty. He placed the plates on the sofa and the glasses on the ground. Severus unloaded the food and placed it onto the plates then magically filled the glasses with pumpkin juice. Next he stood and conjured a small table. Harry picked up the glasses and put them on the table then sat down on the sofa, plate in his lap.

They ate in silence and Harry found himself enjoying his food. The silence however made him slightly uncomfortable.

“What is your opinion of my home?” Severus asked suddenly, he finished the last of his food and put the plate on the table.

Harry looked at him in surprise before grinning. “I love it!”

“Do not lie to me, I know there is not much here,” Severus snapped. “I can situate you in a better house, perhaps Malfoy manor, if you prefer.”

Harry set his empty plate down on the table and turned to hug Severus tightly. “I really do love your house. I can call it my own; I have my own room. It feels like I belong here.”

Severus looked shocked but recovered instantaneously. He hugged Harry back and smiled faintly.

“You may call Spinner’s End your home for as long as you desire,” Severus muttered, feeling a bit ashamed for doubting Harry.

They were surprised when Tom Riddle appeared out of thin air, face hard. “Would he be welcome even if he betrays me and you are no longer allowed to contact him in the future?”

Severus looked at Tom and quickly vanished the table before dropping to a knee. He was surprised at Tom’s appearance, but did not let it show.

“My lord. Although my loyalty to you is strong, it is not strong enough to keep me from Harry. We are family now.”

To Severus’ surprise, Tom smiled. “That is good to hear, old friend.”

Harry was smiling too. “Why are you here?”

“Urgent business, I’m afraid,” Tom explained.

Severus stood swiftly. “Is this about the headmaster?”

Tom nodded before sparing a glance at Harry. “I’m afraid I can’t let you know about this just yet, Harry. I need to speak to Severus in private.”

Harry looked vaguely hurt, but put up his Slytherin mask and went upstairs to his room. Tom watched him carefully before warding the room with a strong silencing charm.

“This is about Lily Potter as well as the headmaster,” Tom began.

Severus sat down on the sofa and Tom took the armchair. “I will not speak a word of this to Harry.”

“Very well,” Severus agreed.

Harry scowled angrily at his book. It was no use, he could attempt doing his homework or even bother reading. His mind was angrily storming and the thought that more secrets would be kept from him was becoming apparent.

Severus was his guardian now, didn't that mean they couldn't keep secrets from one another? Harry doubted it. He had secrets he kept from Severus, although Harry now believed that Severus was onto what those secrets may be.

It was hard for a child to understand that adults had larger secrets and perhaps they only had them in order to keep people safe. Sometimes it was better not to know, but a near 13 year old would not understand that so well. One day, Harry would grow older and find he had secrets that he could never share with Severus because he was ashamed of them or because he didn't want to get Severus hurt.

Harry wondered what they could be talking about downstairs. “I know Tom mentioned Dumbledore,” he murmured to himself.

“That isn't all it though. I know Tom wouldn't shield me from the conversation if only Dumbledore was involved.”

There was something more being discussed, something that wouldn't be beneficial for Harry to know just yet.

Sirius looked down at his letter and scowled. Ink blots and rough scratches littered the parchment. He couldn't send this, it was ridiculous. But what could Sirius say to a man he betrayed? It had been nearly 7 years since he had spoken to the man. What could he say? How could he apologize? Sirius' heart panged guiltily as he looked down at the name the letter was addressed to.

Remus Lupin.

Taking a deep breath, Sirius started writing all over again.

Remus,

I understand that you want nothing to do with me, but I can't let this go on any longer. I am still James' friend, but I want to see you again. I want to be friends again. Damn it, Remus, I'm sorry. I don't know what was wrong with me, he's my best friend and you were too. I guess I chose one side over the other and I didn't regret that...not until now.

I saw Harry. He was with Charlie Weasley for the summer when I saw him. I don't know where he is right now, but he looked well. He looked happy. I realized then that maybe even if I didn't regret my choices I wish I had found a way to make everyone happy.

Please talk to me Remus. I want to make it up to you. Can we have another shot at being friends? We went through so much together. I want to do what I can to atone for my mistakes. I haven't told James that I'm writing this letter. I want to hear from you first, hear what you think, and I...even thought James is my best friend...I trust your opinion more than his.

Seeing Harry made me want this more than ever. I don't know my godson, if I can even be called his godfather still. I don't think Harry will accept me, in fact I know for a fact that he won't.

Please, Remus, think carefully and let us have our second chance.

Padfoot

Sirius read it over and felt satisfied with himself. Everything he had written was true, and he knew that was the first step to mending their friendship. God, he missed Moony. Sirius could only hope that Remus would at least read the letter. After sealing it closed and tying it to an owl, Sirius watched as the letter faded into the distance.

Draco yawned as he made his way down to the kitchens of the manor for a late night snack. He froze as he approached his father's study. The lights were on and Draco could hear his parents yelling at one another. He furrowed his brow but could not make out what they were saying. Draco felt a little frightened. His parents never fought this badly, so whatever made them so upset must have been important. He hoped they would stop soon as he really didn't want to hear anymore screaming.

Snack forgotten, Draco hurried back to his room. He did not see the door to the study open or hear his mother step outside to watch him disappeared around a corner.

Narcissa frowned in worry. Lucius came up behind her and placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Draco heard us," she said, her tone tired.

Lucius sighed and pressed his fingers to his forehead. "I do not want to argue when our son can hear."

"I do not want to argue at all," Narcissa snapped back.

Lucius wrapped his arms around her and she relaxed into his hold. "It is unavoidable at times, but I do not enjoy it."

Narcissa turned around and pressed her lips to Lucius'. "We need to decide soon what we will do with Draco. I don't want him involved in this war. It won't be long before the Dark Lord starts his plans."

Lucius looked into her eyes. "I want Draco to be safe, but there is nowhere he can go. I refuse to send him away to a foreign country to hide. My son is stronger than that and I will not make a coward out of him. For now, let him enjoy school. We will do our best to protect him in this war when the time comes."

Narcissa looked ready to cry but she nodded determinedly. "Very well. His happiness is here and that matters more than his safety right now."

"He will thank you for not shipping him away," Lucius whispered.

"I only want what every mother wants for their child," Narcissa replied defensively.

"I know," Lucius assured. "For that, you are a good mother."

Narcissa kissed him again.

Severus stood and bowed his head as Tom stood.

"Let me see your mark." Tom waited patiently as Severus undid his cuffs and pushed up his sleeve.

Severus stretched his left arm forward and winced when Tom pressed his finger to the Dark Mark. Severus did not dare close his eyes, even as they watered from the intense pain.

"My sign has awoken as well, now." Tom smirked.

"I will be at Riddle Manor," he told Severus. "Nagini will be waiting for me."

"She is still alive?" Severus asked, face stoic despite his surprise.

"I left her with instructions to stay in the forest during my absence. She will still be alive now, of that I am sure. The Dark Mark is also

connected to her, and she will have felt my presence through it.” Tom smiled, and it chilled Severus.

“Goodnight, Severus. Take care of Harry.”

Severus nodded and waited until the Dark Lord disappeared before he pinched the bridge of his nose.

They had had an interesting chat, one that had startled Severus and made him wary. He tried to calm his thoughts and thanked himself for learning Occlumency. He would have to start teaching Harry soon, just how Occlumency worked. Perhaps the boy would grasp it quickly, perhaps he would take more time. Either way, Severus was determined to teach him how to shield his mind, especially during times like this.

Exhaling heavily, Severus his way upstairs and into Harry’s room. He snorted lightly when he saw Harry asleep and lying awkwardly with a book beside him. Severus placed the book on top of Harry’s trunk and straightened the boy into a more comfortable position on the bed. He conjured another sheet and tucked the boy in.

Severus couldn’t help but laugh inwardly at how sentimental he was being. Who would have ever thought that the dreaded potions master would ever tuck in a Potter of all people? Severus scratched that from his mind. He’s a Snape now, he thought with pride.

No matter what happens, I will take care of him.

Severus entered his own room and closed the door behind him. He pulled off his shirt and looked down at his left forearm. The Dark Mark burned black, darker than ever. Severus wondered which ones would run and which ones would remain loyal. They had their chance to try and escape now before the Dark Lord called for a meeting.

A foreboding chill had entered Severus, one that chilled him to the bone. This year would not be peaceful, and Severus would have to do his best to protect Harry, even if it was from the Dark Lord himself.

Chapter 2

Occlumency

:LET ME OUT!: Aeni screamed.

Harry jumped and looked at his trunk in horror. He had forgotten about her! Thankfully it had been only one day since he had hidden her in there. Harry thanked himself for charming food and water in there as well. He jumped off his bed and opened the trunk. Aeni flew out at him and sunk her fangs into him.

:STOP!: Harry hissed, eyes wide.

Aeni released him, and coiled herself around his wrist.

:How dare human forget me!:

:You bit me!:

:No poison was transferred.: It sounded as if she was pouting.

Harry pressed his hand against the wound on his arm. :It is bleeding still.:

:You deserve it.: Aeni loosened herself and flicked her tongue out to smell the blood. :It is not serious.:

Harry sighed. :I apologize. A lot has happened.:

"I was wondering where that wretched thing had disappeared to," Severus said from the doorway.

Harry whipped around and smiled sheepishly. "You don't mind do you, Sev?"

Severus sighed. "I suppose I have no choice in the matter as you two have bonded as familiar and master."

Harry blinked at looked at Aeni. "I suppose we have."

Severus walked up to Harry and looked at the wound. "Perhaps not if she is inflicting damage onto you."

"Ah this, she was just angry 'cause I forgot about her," Harry explained.

"It's not poisonous or infected," he added quickly.

Severus pursed his lips and looked at the snake in disdain. "Very well."

Aeni recoiled a little causing the two humans to smirk. Harry smiled his thanks when Severus healed the wound.

:I want to see house, all of it.: Aeni hissed.

:You are too demanding.: Harry snapped.

Aeni did not recoil but looked at Severus who raised his eyebrow in askance.

"She wants to explore your house," Harry explained.

Severus' eyebrow dropped back to normal. "That is fine with me, just do not create a mess."

Harry smiled. "Thanks, Severus."

"Oh and Harry, it is our house now," Severus said before sweeping out of the room, leaving a beaming sentimental boy.

:There is not much to see, but I love it.: Harry hissed in warning.

Aeni simply slithered up and coiled herself around his bicep. As soon as Harry stepped out of the bedroom, Aeni started looking around wildly. He could see why, the walls were covered with tightly packed bookshelves. Even the backs of doors had bookshelves. Harry assumed spells kept them from falling off. There was another bedroom up on the second floor, which was Severus'. Harry dared not enter it so they made their way down the stairs to the living room.

:It is live a cell: Aeni hissed.

Harry rolled his eyes. The living room walls were covered in books as well, and the threadbare furniture looked kind of homey. The candle lamp that hung from the ceiling, Harry thought, was the only thing to make the room look dingy.

Aeni looked at one particular bookshelf intently. :There is old smell.:

Harry blinked and moved towards the bookshelf. He slipped his fingers in the tiny crack between it and the next bookshelf and yanked at it. Surprisingly, the shelf moved out and revealed a narrow staircase, not unlike the main staircase.

“What’s up there?” Harry whispered to himself.

He tried to step onto the staircase but was thrown back by an invisible barrier. Aeni hissed sharply.

:Too much magic.:

Harry sighed. :Maybe I can ask Severus about it.:

:You ask, not me.: Aeni huffed.

Harry ignored her and shoved the bookshelf back into its place. Not a second later, Severus appeared behind them, looking at them suspiciously.

“I should have known you would find those stairs,” Severus muttered to himself.

“Am I allowed to know what’s up them?” Harry inquired.

“Not yet. I will inform you when I believe you should know.” Severus smirked at the visible irritation bubbling up in his ward.

Harry did not press the issue but instead returned to his room to fume silently, Aeni hissing angry rants with him.

Severus looked down at Harry in amusement as the boy cringed from the loud ringing coming out of his wand.

“Wha’ was tha’ for?” Harry groaned.

“We have much to do today,” Severus started. “The last week must have bored you as you spent it finishing homework and reading.”

Harry sat up and nodded, eyes slowly focussing. “Are we finally going out?”

“Indeed, I will be taking you into Knockturn Alley with me for some business today,” Severus explained. “It will not be the most exciting, but you shall at least get out of the house.”

Harry grinned. “It sounds like fun already.”

Severus raised a brow. “We shall see.”

Severus decided to go make breakfast while Harry got ready for the day. They kept conversation to a minimum while eating so they could leave quickly. While they were walking a safe distance away from the street to a less populated area, Severus explained what the trip was for.

“I have been given an opportunity in which I may use a potions laboratory at my leisure. In return, I will brew specific potions for a shop owner in Knockturn Alley. It is a fair trade and I will not need to spend much time on those potions.” Severus looked pleased with the idea.

Harry smiled but his mind was jumbled with many questions. Before he could voice any of them Severus stopped and grabbed Harry’s shoulder.

“Prepare yourself,” was all the warning Severus gave Harry before they apparated to the entrance of Knockturn Alley.

Harry fell into Severus’ side as they reappeared, feeling rather sick.

“Sorry,” he mumbled sheepishly.

Severus brushed it off but did not let go of Harry’s shoulder as they walked down the cobbled pathway of the dirty market. Harry looked at the shops in wonder. He had been there before, but the items and people there were constantly changing.

“Could we look at some of the shops? I don’t want to buy anything, just look,” Harry whispered at Severus.

The dour man frowned. “I cannot have you dillydallying as there is work to be done.”

Seeing Harry’s crestfallen look, Severus cursed himself inwardly. “Perhaps if there is time afterwards, we may browse the shops.”

Harry grinned cheerfully. “Really?”

“Yes really, now shush, brat.”

Harry was careful not to show his pleasure at the teasing tone in Severus’ comment. They paused in front of a seedy looking potions shop. It was tiny and even from the outside it looked crammed in between its two neighbour shops. Severus looked down at Harry sternly.

“Do not touch anything while you are in there,” Severus instructed.

Harry nodded immediately, knowing better than to touch anything in such a dangerous looking shop. Severus let go of his shoulder and swiftly entered, leaving Harry to hurry in after him.

The inside of the shop was pristine other than a slight coat of dust on the floor. Every potion vial was placed delicately and safely in holders along the walls. They were labelled neatly and looked fairly recent. The shopkeeper however, seemed to ruin the neatness of it all. He was a stout and greasy looking man with one eye. Harry felt a tad intimidated by him and did not trust him one bit. Severus, from the sneer curling his lip, did not look too impressed with him either.

“Allow me to introduce myself,” the greasy man began. “I am Crosh, Alberto Crosh at your service.”

Severus pursed his lips. “Severus Snape. I am here to accept your proposition under a few terms of my own.”

“Ah, let us take this to the potions laboratory then!”

Crosh scuttled past Severus and locked the door before leading the two down a set of stairs to the lab. The laboratory was in even better condition than the shop and Harry could tell Severus was pleased. It was a tad small, but enough for a single potions master.

“It will do,” Severus said. “I insist that I be allowed to use my own wards on this however as my potions are delicate and cannot be disturbed.”

Crosh looked hesitant about that but nodded after a moment’s hesitation. He could not give up the opportunity to have Severus Snape brewing high calibre potions for him after all!

“I will restrict you to requesting only 5 potions per month,” Severus intoned. “The difficulty of the potions you wish for me to brew require precise amount of time.”

Crosh looked displeased but nodded once more. 5 potions wasn’t as unreasonable as he had thought, compared to his original askance.

“We have an agreement then, Crosh,” Severus said, looking down at the man.

Crosh smiled widely and reached out to shake Severus’ hand. The potions master looked disgusted by the prospect but shook Crosh’s hand regardless.

“I have a request already if you do not mind,” Crosh muttered.

“Leave it with me and do not come down here again,” Severus said, not sparing the man another glance.

Crosh stammered something incomprehensible and took out a scroll of parchment from his robes. He placed it down gingerly on a workbench then hurried back up the stairs. Once Harry was sure the man could not hear them, he let out a chuckle. Severus smirked at him then threw up silencing and privacy wards.

"He cannot enter again until I wish for him to," Severus explained at Harry's puzzled expression.

"I don't think he'll be too happy about that." Despite this, Harry was smiling in amusement.

Severus let out an actual smile. "Let's get to work."

While Harry set up the cauldron and necessary tools to brew the potion, Severus gathered all the materials they would need from a fully stocked storage room. Harry looked at the man, knowing he was extremely happy despite his outward appearance. Once again the sudden barge of questions assaulted Harry and he could not help but voice one of the most pressing ones.

"Severus, I have a question." Harry waited patiently for his guardian to acknowledge him.

"What is it?" Severus looked down at him with a raised eyebrow.

"I've read and heard so much about potions master earning a lot of money because of how few go into the profession," Harry started.

Severus' eyes went cold. "We will continue this talk later, for now let us complete this potion."

Harry hastily nodded. "I'm sorry."

"Gather those roots for me and begin dicing them finely and evenly," Severus ordered, avoiding the topic for the moment.

They worked diligently throughout the day until the potion needed to simmer before completion. Severus placed a few light spells on it and rested his hand on Harry's shoulder.

"You have done well today," he complimented. "The potion must simmer for a total of 18 hours before I may add the final ingredients to complete it."

Harry nodded and looked at the clock in the corner of the room. It was just past noon, he had not realized how quickly the time had flown by. A small yawn escaped his lips, alerting Severus.

"Come, we shall eat lunch first then you may take a nap. The fumes have surely exhausted you," Severus clarified at Harry's indignant pout.

Harry nodded and started to clean up the potions utensils, keeping away from the cauldron itself. Severus had told him before they had begun brewing that Harry was not to go near the cauldron because of how strong the potions fumes were to unused brewers. They made quick work of their cleaning and left the laboratory.

"Pardon me, Professor Snape, but I would appreciate it if you did not lock me out of the laboratory," Crosh said, rather boldly.

Severus glared down at him. "It is vital that my potions not be disturbed, do not question my methods as I am doing you a rather large favour. The pay is not even adequate for me to consider a long term agreement."

Crosh paled. "I will settle a higher wage for you, professor."

"See to it. I shall be back tomorrow to resume my work on the potion." With that, Severus swept out of the shop, Harry hurrying behind him.

"Shall we explore first?" Severus himself was all right and did not feel hungry just yet, but he did not want to starve Harry.

Harry nodded quickly. He was a tad hungry, but he could wait and the shops looked far more captivating than food at the moment. Harry started for the nearest shop to them called Borgin and Burkes. Severus was a little wary of the shop, but knew that it was a decent business. Lucius did his bargaining there from what he remembered.

Harry was looking at the various objects lined up on shelves and tables. He stopped at a cabinet and looked at it curiously. Unaware of his actions, he reached out to touch it. Severus cleared his throat and Harry withdrew his hand. He was embarrassed to be caught like a child with its hand in the cookie jar.

Severus peered at the cabinet in interest however and did not scold Harry one bit. Harry himself wondered where the owner was but suspected that he was watching them regardless of his invisibility.

"A vanishing cabinet," Severus muttered.

"What does it do?" Harry asked, feeling a tad thick for asking.

"There are usually two cabinets in a set, you enter one cabinet and reappear out of the other cabinet." Severus' voice was light and vague.

Harry did not press the topic and wandered off to look at other objects. Severus gave the vanishing cabinet one last thoughtful glance before following Harry. He had to make sure the boy didn't touch anything. The last thing Severus wanted was for Harry to get cursed because of curiosity.

It did not take much longer for Harry to lose interest with the shop. The boy felt his stomach protesting and decided that they could always look at more shops another time.

"Can we have lunch now, Sev?" Harry whispered, mindful of the people walking around them in the busy street.

Severus nodded and steered Harry out of Knockturn Alley and into the sunny street of Diagon Alley. They made their way to the Leaky Cauldron for their lunch. It was packed as usual but the duo managed to secure a vacated table in the shadows of the pub.

"I don't know what to order," Harry said softly.

Severus smirked. "Food sounds like a rational idea."

“I mean, I haven’t tried any of these really,” Harry said. “What do you recommend?”

“Most of these dishes are common, I assure you that picking a dish is easier than at a 4 star restaurant.” Severus did not even bother looking at Harry.

Harry sighed and looked at his menu. Tom bustled over in the meantime and looked at Severus expectantly.

“Two specials.” Severus looked at Harry who nodded with a tiny smile.

“Thank you,” Harry said.

Severus leaned back in his seat. “I find it unusual that you can make such pressing decisions in life threatening situations but you cannot pick out your lunch.”

Harry blushed brightly. “I’m a little indecisive.”

Severus’ eyes glittered in amusement. “Very well.”

“Thanks though, Sev,” Harry said honestly.

They had a nice lunch with minimal distractions and soon the two were walking up the riverbank and down Spinner’s End. Harry couldn’t resist running down the street towards the house. He spun around mid-run to grin at Severus who was actually smiling, however faded it was.

Once they entered, Severus ordered Harry to make sure Aeni was not up to any mischief and report back to the living room because they needed to talk. Harry nodded quickly and hissed for Aeni. He found her sleeping on his bed. With a smile, Harry pulled a preserved rat from his trunk and fed it to her. She curled up loosely around his neck, hissing happily every now and then.

“I wish for you to learn Occlumency,” Severus said.

“Occlumency?”

“Occlumency is the art of magically defending the mind against external penetration, sealing it against magical intrusion and influence,” Severus clarified.

Harry nodded. “Its counter is Legilimency?”

“Correct,” Severus said, eyeing Harry suspiciously.

“Draco told me about them, he said his father told him about them,” Harry hurried to state.

“Indeed.” Severus pursed his lips. “I shall be teaching you Occlumency.”

“Aren’t I too young for it?” Harry was curious, it wasn’t that he didn’t want to learn Occlumency, but was he able to?

Severus looked pleased at Harry’s question. “Magically, you are developed enough to begin, but your barriers will be weak for some time yet.”

“Why am I to learn it now then?”

“It will be easier for you in the long run. First step is the most difficult for many people. You must learn to clear your mind of all thought and emotion before you go to sleep. If you have time, try doing so when you are awake as well. I will check on your progress at odd intervals, so do not think you can avoid this,” Severus said sternly.

“Am I supposed to learn because of Tom or Dumbledore?” Harry sighed.

“Both.” Severus sat down. “It is useful for other areas of magic as well.”

“I’ll bet it is, thank you for willingly teaching me, Severus.” Gratitude was something Harry never ran short on when it concerned Severus, the man was constantly giving him something more to be thankful about.

“Sev...can you answer my question from earlier?” Harry said, shuffling his feet and avoiding the man’s eyes.

“I do make quite a bit of money in my profession and field,” Severus stared, pinching the bridge of his nose. “A great deal of my pay goes towards ministry fees that I must pay because of my past with the Dark Lord. I must also pay teacher fees and taxes, which is another chunk of my paycheck. Lastly, I have potion supplies and daily necessities that I must pay for. I could afford a slightly better home but as I spend most of my year at Hogwarts, I see it irrelevant. That is...before I adopted you. I am searching for some place to relocate to.”

Harry’s eyes widened. “You don’t have to do that for me!”

Severus frowned. “This house is not one where I can bring up a child.”

“It’s fine! I don’t mind and I like it here! Please...can’t we stay?” Harry pleaded, standing up now.

Severus looked into Harry’s eyes and nodded curtly. “Very well, if that is your wish.”

Harry beamed. “It is. I mean, we’ll only be here for two months anyways.”

Severus crossed his arms. “Perhaps less. Dumbledore would like the teachers to return a month earlier for preparation instead of the standard two weeks. You may stay with the Malfoys for that month or return to Hogwarts with me. You do not need to decide now however.”

Harry sat down and leaned against Severus. “Okay, I won’t pick now, but I think I want to go with you.”

Severus did not respond but instead picked out two books from his bookshelves. He handed Harry one on Occlumency and sat down with his own. Harry curled up beside him and began to read without question, eventually lulling himself to sleep.

Chapter 3

The Truth About Draco

“Lucius, I have told you before that I will not allow my son to stay here while this bloody war is brewing,” Narcissa snapped, losing all patience.

“Draco should be transferred to Durmstrang for his own safety and I think you really ought to start considering it,” she said, her voice a bit softer than before.

“I will not force Draco to run from this. We have discussed this many times and you have agreed with me in the end. Why do you persist to bring up such unnecessary arguments?” Lucius asked, slumping in his seat.

Narcissa frowned. “The more I think about it, the more I feel I cannot allow Draco to remain here in the heart of the war. I am even prepared to send him to America if it will ensure his survival.”

“Draco understands what is happening around him. He is mature for his age and understands more than other 13 year olds. My son is not a coward and I will not tell him he is to benefit by hiding away like one. I want for him to have a normal childhood as much as you, my love, but Draco will only receive that here with his friends and with the best schooling in the world. He will be prepared under Dumbledore’s teaching and even safe from outer harm.” Lucius sighed and resisted the urge to wince as his knotted muscles protested as he stretched.

Narcissa’s cheeks shone with tears. “I just want my baby safe.” Her voice was hoarse and meek.

Lucius did not look at her. “We have yet another year before thinking more about this and before deciding such drastic measures.”

“I want Draco to be in a position where he can live normally,” Narcissa whispered. “I understand that he will never forgive me for

sending him away, but I cannot shun that option if worst comes to worse.”

Lucius scowled at Narcissa’s insistent and hurried voice. Her skin was flushed and her iced over eyes were narrowed.

“Draco has chosen his position in life,” Lucius drawled.

Narcissa’s eyes bore into his, fierce and demanding. “He is only 13, how could he know what is best for him?” she snarled.

“Harry James Snape,” Lucius said, eyes daring Narcissa to challenge him. “Draco has quite clearly sworn his allegiance to him for the time being and our son’s loyalty is to Harry. If you try and break them, I assure you that Draco will not go quietly.”

Narcissa backed down and collapsed into an armchair. “I want to talk to Severus about them. There is more than we see happening. I am not sure whether all of this is entirely friendship anymore and if their magic may be meddling in their relationship.”

Lucius looked at her in surprise. “You do not think that...”

Narcissa looked saddened but nodded. “I think it may be a possibility.”

Lucius sucked in a sharp breath. “The genetics may be wrong.”

“They may, but we do not know that,” Narcissa whispered. “I want to make sure.”

“We have until Draco’s 16th birthday to figure something out. He may not have valid blood and even so, it is too early to determine such.”

Narcissa pursed her lips. “The Dark Lord told us the risks of the blood transfusion, I think it is time we start looking further into it. Draco is maturing and it may be possible to pick up the traces in his blood. If not, we will continue to look into it as he matures.”

Lucius nodded curtly. He knew Narcissa would persist with this and that she was dealing with it correctly. They had to monitor their son in case of any effects and the Dark Lord had to be notified.

"We shall speak with Severus first and then I shall notify the Dark Lord," Lucius told her. "The blood may not be active."

Narcissa nodded and stood. "I will go firecall Severus. I want this looked into right away so we can start preparing for anything in the future if the blood is valid."

Lucius said nothing and waved her in dismissal. He stood once she left and poured himself a glass of well-aged brandy. He downed it in one shot and placed his glass down, ready to confront Severus.

Severus looked at his fireplace with a scowl that barely softened when he saw Narcissa's urgent face.

"It is important that I speak with you," she said, interrupting him before he could speak.

Severus' eyes swivelled around to look at Harry who was staring at them in confusion.

"Stay here and do not leave the house, I shall return shortly," Severus instructed.

Harry's brow puckered but he nodded. He pointedly ignored them as he returned to reading his book. Severus did not bother with him, he had informed Harry of the secrets that would be kept from him and the boy knew better than to sulk.

Severus ushered Narcissa to get out of his floo so he could go through. She disappeared and not a moment later, so did Severus. Harry sighed at the flames and hissed softly to Aeni.

:I am tired of secrets.: he sounded dreadfully tired.

:Secrets are for safety.: Aeni replied, offhandedly.

:I know and that is why they bother me more. Surely I will be better knowing the secrets so I can avoid certain dangers?:

:They will not say to you anyways.: Aeni slithered into his lap and made herself comfortable before falling asleep.

Harry lay down on the sofa and stared at the ceiling in disappointment until he too dozed off.

“What is so pressing that you needed to disturb me?” Severus was none to pleased by the prospect.

“It is about Draco,” Narcissa responded softly, eyes watchful for her son.

Severus said nothing but quickened his pace to Lucius’ study.

“Care for a glass, Severus?” Lucius asked immediately, pointing to the brandy.

“Thank you.” Severus sat down and accepted a glass heavily loaded with brandy.

Lucius and he sipped at their alcohol and looked at Narcissa expectantly. She looked to be bursting with questions. Severus knew this conversation would not end prettily.

“The transfusion,” Narcissa began. “Will it affect Draco greatly?”

Severus sighed. “You know very well that any amount of creature blood pumped into a newborn child will affect them in some way, whether it be their characteristics or whether they turn into that particular creature.”

Narcissa nodded. “The bond between Draco and Harry has me suspicious that Draco may be have valid creature blood. It will

become dominant over his human blood when he turns 16 if that is the case.”

Severus nodded.

Lucius cleared his throat. “My wife is proposing that Harry may possibly be Draco’s mate.”

“That is preposterous to assume at this stage. Draco has shown no positive signs that he will indeed come into his inheritance at the age of 16,” Severus hissed, eyes narrowing at the mention of his child. “Harry himself is far too young for this as well. You cannot push this onto two children. They will not understand the consequences, especially if Draco is indeed holding dominant genes.”

“I want to investigate his blood.” Narcissa looked pleadingly at Severus. “I want to test it and see if it is true. We must start preparing as soon as possible if it is. The transfusion required a lot of blood and I am sure of it, it is my motherly instinct.”

Flashback

“We have a problem,” said the healer that was tending to Narcissa Malfoy.

Lucius narrowed his eyes. He had called the healer a few hours ago when his wife had started having her contractions, signalling she was ready to give birth.

“She’s lost a lot of blood, sir, the baby may not come out in time as she’s already dying,” the healer quickly explained looking distraught.

“What can be done to save their lives?” Lucius demanded, his Malfoy mask cracking.

“A blood transfusion, but there is no one who can be found quickly enough that will have the required blood type needed.” The healer

looked frightened of revealing all this information but knew better than to withhold it.

Lucius paled drastically when he heard his wife scream and the healers that were working with her start yelling instructions to each other. He stormed out of the hallway and went to his study. Lucius did not think twice before tossing a decent amount of glittering powder in the fireplace and sticking his head in.

"My lord!" Lucius called out, all restraints gone.

"What is the meaning of this, Lucius?" Voldemort hissed.

His eyes narrowed in anger.

"My wife is giving birth but there are complications. Please, my lord, she will not survive if I cannot find a suitable blood transfusion," he pleaded.

Voldemort frowned. "I have blood that shall ensure her survival, but it is creature blood. Are you prepared to risk your son's human status?"

Lucius froze. "Please, my lord, anything will do. I will deal with it when the time comes."

"Very well. It is vampire blood, highly toxic yet highly valuable."

Voldemort waved his hand and six large vials of blood appeared, neatly tucked in a box.

"The blood has been aged." Voldemort stared hard at Lucius. "This will give your son a greater chance of remaining human, but you shall not know until his 16th birthday. I suggest you do your research, Lucius."

Lucius reached out and took the blood, bowing as well as he could. "Thank you, my lord. I am forever in your debt."

Lucius disappeared quickly and hurried to his bedroom. Narcissa's screams had become hoarse and weak when he entered the room. Her eyes were unseeing and she clawed at the bed as the healers

debated over doing a caesarean section. The only problem would be that Narcissa and the baby might both die either way because of the lack of blood. The baby needed more blood in order to survive.

The healers did not question the blood that Lucius gave them and simply began the transfusion. Lucius' brow was furrowed as he thought. The blood would not turn Narcissa as she was fully grown and able to override the vampiric disease with her own human blood. After all, the Dark Lord had explained to Lucius that it was weak and there was little chance it would affect either one of them. Still...the possibility was there in regards to the baby.

The transfusion had worked and Lucius could barely repress his relieved smile. He heard the cry of his heir, as the healers announced it was a boy. Lucius looked down into the face of his child and smiled in pride.

"You shall be named, Draconian Lucian Malfoy," Lucius muttered.

End Flashback

"It will be difficult researching so soon," Severus began. "There are too many unknown factors and the blood may have not made itself known yet, rendering any tests I conduct useless."

Narcissa stood abruptly, glaring heatedly at Severus. "Then there is no harm in conducting these tests!"

"Narcissa." Lucius' voice was stern and cold but before he could reprimand his wife, she stormed out of the study.

"As stubborn as she is being, time is indeed running out. Preparations will take a year at the least to complete should Draco's blood reveal him to be a magical creature," Lucius whispered, head dropping into his hands.

"I agree to test Draco, but I wonder if this will be the right thing to submit him to?" Severus was reluctant in agreeing but knew that there was little choice.

"I do not want Draco to know just yet. It will cause him unnecessary worry and stress, and I fear he may do something stupid." Lucius smiled a little. "Our children have a tendency of getting into the most troubling scenarios with or without incensed feelings backing them up."

"Yes, it is best to withhold this information for a little longer yet. I do not want Harry getting involved too early either," Severus admitted. "Both are young and they may not love each other in such a way. It may be a familial bond between them instead and so this caution may be superfluous."

"We can only wait and see," Lucius said, downing a healthy dose of brandy.

Severus followed his example and drained his own glass. "I find it rather disturbing."

Lucius chuckled. "Indeed. I rather not think of my son doing such things."

Unknown to the two men, Draco had crept up and started listening to the remaining conversation. In her rage, Narcissa had clumsily left the door open for anyone to hear. Draco did not have to strain much to hear what they were saying. His eyes narrowed in curiosity as his father brought up his name.

"Narcissa wishes to send Draco to Durmstrang." Lucius peered at Severus through the corner of his eye.

Severus sneered. "It is useless to try and hide him from the war. Your family is too powerful to be forgotten, Lucius. The Dark Lord, the ministry and even Dumbledore will not forget about Draco and his influence on the future of the Malfoy line.

Draco gulped, his eyes widening.

“Still, Narcissa persists after all these facts have been laid down for her. She is rather set on having Draco sent away for the rest of his education. He will be safer at Durmstrang, no doubt, but I do not think he is willing to leave Hogwarts behind...or Harry.”

Draco blinked at the sudden impact of pain in his chest. He dropped to his knees, silently. His father was right. He would never leave, not while Harry was still at Hogwarts. How could his mother think that Draco would be all right with that? Did she not understand how he wanted to have his own role in the war? Did she not understand that he could not, would not, run away?

With a heavy heart, Draco set out to find his mother. It was about time that they had a talk.

Chapter 4

Safety First

“Mother,” Draco greeted coldly.

Narcissa put down the book she was reading and arched a brow at her son. “Do not take that tone with me, Draco.”

“How long have you been planning to send me away?” Draco demanded.

Narcissa did not lose her composure in the slightest. She was taught better than to lower her defences, even in front of her own son.

“Did your father tell you this?” Narcissa inquired calmly.

Draco shook his head. “It doesn’t matter how I know. What matters is that you think my life would work out better if you had me locked away Merlin knows where!”

Narcissa frowned. “It is not like that, Draco. I merely suggested that if we sent you to Durmstrang, you could avoid partaking in the war. Your father and I would go with you but we are far too involved as it is.”

“I’m involved too, you know?” Draco sat down across from her. “Being a Malfoy and being your son makes me involved in this war. Mother...you can’t protect me from it.”

Narcissa glared at him. “You are involved right now because of *him*.”

“Harry did not have a choice, his former parents are the reason why he is involved. We did not choose this life for ourselves but we won’t run away from it!” Draco snapped.

A dainty hand smoothed nonexistent rumples. "I just want you to be safe, Draco. I don't want to hurt you."

"By locking me away, you'll hurt me. My place is here beside Harry and beside father. I will not desert my family or my best friend." Draco looked into his hands.

Narcissa let out a derisive chuckle. "I guess mother doesn't know best after all."

"Don't say that." Draco hugged her briefly. "I love you, mum. Even if we don't express it, I do love you."

Narcissa smiled. "I know, love. I just want to keep you safe from Dumbledore and even from the Dark Lord."

"...and Harry as well," Draco added, eyes accepting and bitter.

Narcissa didn't meet his eye. "I adore the boy but he is the source of much trouble these last two years. The Dark Lord has taken an interest in him as has Dumbledore. You are standing beside a boy who will be pitted into the heart of the war. Forgive me if I bare a little resentment to him as well as sorrow for what he must do and what you will inevitably do to go with him."

Draco smirked. "You know me too well. Mother, rest assured that I will be safer here than anywhere else. I have the Malfoy protection here as well as spending most of my year at Hogwarts – the safest place I can be at the moment."

Narcissa nodded. "Yes. I know, darling. It is just difficult to accept. I hope you know that I will never speak out against Harry. I would not wish his fortune on anyone else and I hate to see him suffer so. I will always put you before anyone else, however, even myself."

Draco's throat closed up. "Don't talk that way, mother. Please?"

Narcissa's eyes were narrowed and her smile bitter. "You need to learn, Draco, that you cannot always have what you want."

Lucius entered the room and surveyed the scene with distaste. "I suppose you have found out about your mother's...concerns."

"We're you really planning to ship me away?" Draco's voice was low and dangerous.

"Must I remind you of whom you are speaking to?" Lucius drawled, radiating malice.

Draco pursed his lips but knew his place. "I apologize, father, but I wish for you to answer my question."

Lucius caressed the snake head of his cane. "My suggestions opposed your mother's and as I am patriarch, naturally I sent you where I thought you belonged."

Draco's brow furrowed. "You believe me to be safe at Hogwarts?"

Lucius sent a sharp smile at Narcissa. "We shall discuss your safety accordingly. For the moment, you do not need to worry yourself, Draco. I will not be sending you elsewhere other than Hogwarts."

"Yes, father." Draco stood. "If that is all, I will take my leave. There is much I need to think about."

"Wait, Draco." Lucius' voice rang out loud and clear despite him not having raised it. "Harry is not compromising your safety yet, so disregard your mother's concerns if you believe he is the cause of your troubles."

Draco snorted. "There is more to the war than just Harry and I know that my name and my status will give me more to worry about."

"I am proud of you, Draco," Lucius murmured, treating his son to a rare smile.

Draco smiled back. "Thank you, father."

Draco exited the room, leaving it available for his parents to converse about what had happened. He knew they would not take it lightly and that the discussion would be continued at a later date. Perhaps when

that time arose, Draco would be more likely to win. He knew he had thwarted his mother's need to protect him for only a little while.

Draco lounged in his room for a moment and decided it was time to write Harry a letter. It had been some time since they had much contact and Draco wondered how he was holding up. Draco had never been to Snape Mansion but he hoped it wasn't too empty for Harry's taste.

Sighing, Draco stared at a blank piece of parchment and debated what to write. He dipped his expensive eagle quill into the ink and let it drip on the parchment for a moment.

Dear Harry,

Draco scratched that out. It sounded odd.

Harry,

Draco scratched that out too. It was too formal.

To my best friend Harry,

Draco snorted and cut a thick line of ink through it.

To Harry,

Draco made a face. That would do and didn't sound incredibly formal, but formal enough for a letter.

To Harry,

I 'overheard' my parents speaking about me. My mother, the loving woman and protective woman she is, decided that I would be better off going to school at Durmstrang in order to get away from the danger that is arising, slowly but surely, in Britain. Don't worry! My father and I persuaded her that it would be best if I remained here where she could keep an eye on me.

I let her think that I won't go prying into matters that aren't my own, but as a Slytherin, I find that rather offensive and will make it my

hobby to pry into matters. How else am I supposed to rise up above the others and show them that I'm in charge?

Anyways, I thought you ought to know. Things are still well between my parents and I because Malfoys do not have falling outs or rows within the family.

Don't laugh at me.

Yes, it's in the book.

Shutup!

I can picture your reactions to my letter rather easily and I find that strange. I can't do that with Theo or Blaise, only you.

I think that we share something more personal than we do with Theodore and Blaise. They are close to us, but they don't understand us. They don't know your secrets like I do and they don't know my secrets like you do.

If you ever tell them, I'll kill you!

No, that's not an idle threat you great git!

Harry...I've been feeling weird lately. I keep feeling hot and bothered, especially when I think of you. Sometimes I get that way when I think of Blaise but it's not as bad. Is there some sort of curse on me? I can't stand it. If I tell father, he might punish me or worse...laugh at me!

I don't know what's wrong with me, Harry, but maybe we can find out together.

Do you feel it too? Do you feel too hot?

When we see each other again. We can talk more about this.

Love, Draco

Draco frowned and scratched out the last line.

Yours truly, Draco

Draco nodded. There! That sounded adequate enough to send to Harry. First he needed to write a good draft because a Malfoy would never send out something so messy. Before Draco even realized it, he was putting his equipment away and placing the drying letter in the bottom of his trunk.

It was too childish to send a letter like that and Draco suddenly felt that he should wait and tell Harry about it in person. There was a lot he couldn't explain in a letter, like his new feelings.

Draco smiled. "For now, this will be my little secret."
